

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

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1. A treating agent for use in the Bayer process in filtration of caustic sodium alumina solution, said treating agent comprising:
a blend of starch and another polysaccharide.
 - 5 2. A treating agent as claimed in claim 1 wherein the polysaccharide is selected from the group consisting of pullulan, dextran, alginate, zooglan, lactan or mixtures thereof
 3. A treating agent as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the treating agent is dextran.
 4. A treating agent as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3 further incorporating a filter aid for assisting the filtration of the caustic sodium aluminate solution.
 - 10 5. A treating agent as claimed in claim 4 wherein the filter aid is calcium aluminate.
 6. A treating agent as claimed in claim 4 or 5 wherein the filter aid is a 12% aqueous suspension of calcium aluminate.
 7. A treating agent as claimed in any one of the preceding claims comprising up to 10 ppm of polysaccharide and 200-300 ppm of starch.
 - 15 8. A treating agent as claimed in any one of the preceding claims comprising up to 5 ppm of polysaccharide.
 9. A treating agent as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the polysaccharide to starch ratio is between 9:1 and 1:9.
 10. An improvement in the Bayer process wherein bauxite is added to a caustic
20 solution to produce a slurry of sodium aluminate solution and an insoluble red mud fraction which is then subjected to a thickener and separation step to produce a thickener overflow, said thickener overflow being subjected to filtration, the improvement comprising:

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- Figure 1. The structure of the proposed model.